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ARTS

**Unoriginal Sins**



by Howard Kaman

The Originals

There is a fundamental problem inherent in reviewing a bar band. It is, quite simply, that too many of them sound the same.

As you might expect, a band called The Originals would have a particularly difficult time with this. And they do.

It is for this reason that I entered Billy Barroo's with trepidation. I didn't know whether I would see a barely good bar band, or a group that truly lived up to its name.

Unfortunately though, original they are not. They are a particularly good bar band, in that they have mastered many different styles of music. But, rather oddly, their diversity best shows up in their choice of songs to cover.

When Mike Stansfield roars through "Roadhouse Blues," and chants "Woke up this mornin' and I got myself a beer," he sings it like he means it. When he rips through Jimi Hendrix's "Fire," he erupts with energy on stage. And when The Originals play the Beatles' "Why Don't We Do It In The Road," they do John Lennon justice.

But The Originals borrow and steal from their sources too easily. Songs range from the Blue Rodeo-ish "God Bless America," with its sarcastic commentary and military beat, to the Doors-style "Games We Play." Unlike their sources of inspiration, the band hasn't learned to blend their interests into a coherent original style. It is far too easy to pick out who Stansfield is trying to emulate with his voice, or who guitarist Mike Spriggs is trying to copy.

Don't get me wrong. The Originals

are an exceptional bar band. They play tight, energetic rock. They just don't do it with flair.

But, then again, a style takes time to develop. It takes years of growth and change, while the band bravely experiments with the muse.

Founded in 1985 by Spriggs and Stanfield, The Originals are still young. Rounded out by bassist Bob Crane and drummer (and York student) Robbie DeSimone, they only began playing the circuit three years ago.

However, they have come far in those three years. They represented Canada at the 1990 New Music Seminar in New York City, bringing them to the attention of major record companies in both Canada and the United States.

With ambitions and incentives like this, they may yet be originals soon.

**Lobotomies-R-Us**



by Hugh Hardy

**John Hiatt**  
*Stolen Moments*  
A&M Records

John Fogerty wanted to be Jerry Garcia. Elvis wanted to be Dean Martin, but became Jerry Lewis instead. Paul Westerburg wants to be Michael Stipe. So who does John Hiatt want to be? Pretty much all of them in one way or another I think.

Hiatt's raspy yowl has been just out of earshot, skirting mainstream popularity, for over 10 years since the release of *Slug Line*, in 1979. On *Stolen Moments*, it seems that Hiatt is finally cashing in his chips in a last-ditched attempt to hit paydirt.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not one of those sour-puss, "alternative" grinchers who won't touch any record with a thirty-nine and-a-half foot pole unless it is released on an independent label or has the City Limits seal of approval. Good music is good music regardless of where it's played, or who is playing it.

However, in this case, the tell-tale signs of artistic concessions, made with hopes of making a buck, are pretty obvious. I'm not against anyone cashing in; it's just that when I have to wade through heaping piles of shit in order to find some decent music, it tends to make me a tad cynical.

Hiatt employed studio-Met-huselah, Glyn Johns, who, you may (or may not) remember,

resuscitated the Who from their *Lifehouse* disaster in 1971 to create the rather truncated but still brilliant *Who's Next*. Johns' antiseptic production, however, is all wrong for Hiatt; who's music cries for a more murkier, rustic sound. The dumb-bell synthesizer arrangements don't help either. They sit above the mix like syrup on flap-jacks, denying any toughness the artist may (half-heartedly) have intended.

The lyrics are pathetically generic; your basic-oooh baby I'm a tough un-worked the railroad

from age seven-drink myself stupid every night-had eight illegitimate kids-got audited-went to the slammer-got out-shot some H-at end of rope-THEN I FOUND YOU!!!-type soap operas. My personal favourite is "Child of the Wild Blue Yonder", winner of this weeks memorial Bon Bolton Drecky Award:

"She's a Child of the Wild Blue Yonder/Flying out of here./She's a Child of the Wild Blue Yonder/-Born in an angel's tear..."

Touching stuff, if you've just had a lobotomy.

compiled by Trevor Campbell

*The I.D.A. Gallery*, in the Fine Arts Building, Phase 2, features the recent work of MFA students on Oct. 17-26.

The Society of Estonian Artist's **35th Anniversary Juried Art Exhibition**, presents a wide array of visual arts at the Samuel J. Zack's Gallery until Oct. 31.

York University presentation of **Five Decades of Mexican Film** at the Nat Taylor Cinema, N102 Ross, continues until Oct. 31. All shows start at 8pm, and are in Spanish with English subtitles. Tonight's feature is *Retrato de Una Mujer Casada*, directed by Alberto Bohorques. On Oct. 26, the series continues with *Estes Ruinas Que Ves*, by Julian Pastor. The series finishes on Oct. 31, with *Vidas Errantes*, by Juan Antonio de la Riva.

YFS/FEY's Reel and Screen, 1990/91, presents relatively recent mainstream films every Friday and Saturday, at 7 and 9pm, in the Cur-

tis L screening room. This weekend's themes are fun and fright, with *Rocky Horror* and *Exorcist I* featured on the 26th and 27th. Price of admission is \$5.50, for two, or \$2.50, for one.

Theatre York presents information (about its Nov. 6 to 7, production of *Zastorozzi*) punctuated by combat scenes, at the West Bear Pit on Oct. 25 and 26, from 9am to 4pm.

*Cloud Nine*, Caryl Churchill's play exploring stereotypes and sexual role reversals, floats into Glendon college from on Oct. 23-27, at Theatre Glendon.

*Structure and Mechanic, Mechanic Organic*, by Reinhard Reitzenstein, continues at Glendon Gallery until Nov. 1.

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